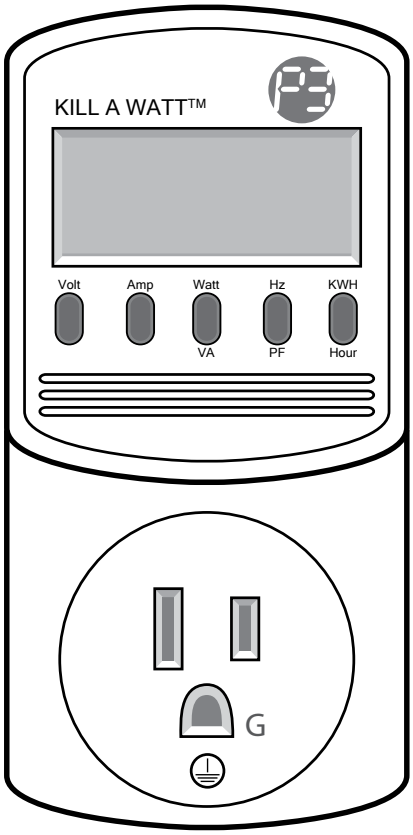
KILL A WATT METER

The Kill A Watt Meter is a device that lets you "see" how much power and/or energy an appliance in your house is using instantaneously or over a period of time. This page will help you understand some of the basic tools on this energy meter.



Directions: Plug the Kill A Watt Meter into a wall socket. Plug the device into the socket on the meter. The Watt button and kWh button are toggle switches. Make sure you have toggled each switch to make sure the readout is for watts (Watt/VA button) and kilowatt-hours (kWh/Hour button).

Volt button

When the Kill A Watt is plugged into the wall, the volt button will probably read somewhere around 120V. When you plug an appliance into the meter, it indicates the output voltage required to run your appliance.

Amp button

The AMP button will measure the flow of electric charge required to run your appliance. This value can vary greatly depending on the appliance you have plugged into the meter. When nothing is plugged in, this should read zero since no charge is flowing.

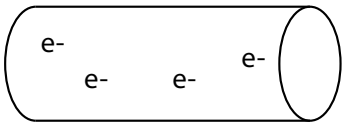
Watt button

The Watt button measures the power required to run your appliance. This is a measure of the movement of electrical energy required to make your device (blender, TV, etc.) function.

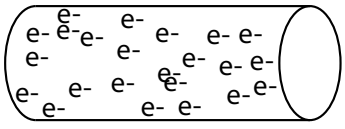
kWh

The kWh button measures the amount of energy used by your appliance.

In a water analogy, this would be equivalent to a bucket of water. It is a quantity of energy that can do a certain amount of work. If we had a lot of pressure (voltage) and a lot of water (current) moving through a hose, we could fill up the bucket very fast.



Less Current

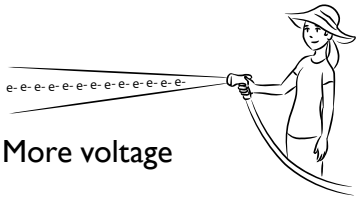


More Current

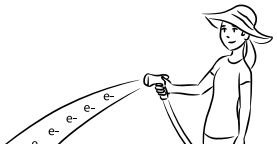
What is current?

Current (amperage) is the flow of electric charge in a conductor.

Using water as an analogy, we can think of this as the amount of water flowing through a tube. The higher the current, the more water that is moving in the tube. Low current would be similar to less water flowing in the same size tube.



More voltage



What is voltage?

A negative charge will attract a positive charge, and invisible fields of voltage exist between the charges, kind of like magnetic fields. Voltage causes the attraction between opposite charges; we can quantify this attraction with a simple multimeter.

Using water as an analogy, we can also think of voltage like water pressure. Low voltage would resemble water under low pressure. High voltage would resemble water under high pressure. The amount of water is not so important; it is the pressure of the water that matters.